

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, the City of Austin seeks to enhance safety for all of its citizens through the effective use of public safety resources and collaboration with residents and private businesses; and

WHEREAS, burglar alarm systems provide a valuable tool for deterrence and early warning, and Austin has over 52,000 registered systems within the city limits; and

WHEREAS, police service response to burglar alarms constitute 5.2% of total dispatches in 2011 and was a top ten reason for dispatch in nine out of ten sectors; and

WHEREAS, in 2012 there were 31,760 burglar alarm calls of which 28,500 were false and 37% of false alarms came from unpermitted systems; and

WHEREAS, the City Auditor conducted a review in 2009 that identified the need for new software to effectively administer the internal controls and billing procedures of the Austin Police Department's alarm unit, and that software was ultimately purchased and went live in the Spring of 2013; and

WHEREAS, the Austin Police Department joined the False Alarm Reduction Association which is an organization made up of government and

public safety agency employees that are committed to reducing false alarms and sharing best practices; and

WHEREAS, a July 2012 report on the City of Austin's patrol utilization by the Police Executive Research Forum suggested that the high number of burglar alarm dispatches warrants a re-examination of the city's alarm ordinance; and

WHEREAS, the ability to recover costs associated for false alarms is governed by Texas Local Government Code §214.197, which was amended in 2005 and limited a municipality's ability to impose higher fines or stricter regulations related to false alarms; **NOW THEREFORE**,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

The City Manager is directed to work with state-wide partners and the False Alarm Reduction Association to review Texas Local Government Code §214.197, Penalties for False Alarms, and address the low cost recovery for municipal services of current fines and the high occurrence of false alarms.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to review City Code Chapter 4-2 (Alarm Systems) and existing procedures for ways to reduce false alarms, improve cost recovery and efficiently respond to service calls, and to return to City Council with a revised ordinance within 90 days.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to identify city facilities that have multiple false alarm incidents and conduct a review of current internal facilities management and operational practices for ways to reduce false alarms at City of Austin facilities.

ADOPTED: _____, 2014 **ATTEST:** _____
Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk

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